Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 4-9, 15-18, 20, 22, and 23, without prejudice.

Please add new claims 24-31.

1.   (Currently Amended) A call screening database ~~device for use in a packet-based communication network~~ comprising:

one or more communication devices coupled to a packet-based communication network providing access to a gatekeeper;

a memory device including a screening database; and

a processor operable to receive a request from the gatekeeper through the one or more communication devices ~~wherein the gatekeeper receives,~~

wherein in response to a received request, the processor performs call screening in conjunction with the screening database, the call screening including one or more of:

(i) determining whether an inbound call associated with the received request is to be allowed,

(ii) determining whether a called number associated with the received request should be translated, and

(iii) determining whether a routing index should be included in the called number.

2.   (Original)   The call screening database of claim 1, wherein the processor performs call screening by querying the screening database, determining a response to the received request, and sending the response to the gatekeeper.

3.   (Original)   The call screening database device of claim 1, wherein at least one of the one or more communication devices provides access to a packet-based network.

4.   (Currently Amended) The call screening database device of claim 3, wherein the packet-based network [[is]] comprises an Internet protocol (IP) network.

5.   (Currently Amended) The call screening database device of claim 1, wherein the memory device [[is]] comprises random access memory (RAM).

6.   (Currently Amended) The call screening database device of claim 1, wherein the memory device [[is]] comprises a computer harddrive.

7.   (Currently Amended) The call screening database device of claim 1, wherein the screening database [[is]] comprises a flat file database.

8.   (Currently Amended) The call screening database device of claim 1, wherein the screening database [[is]] comprises a relational database.

9.   (Currently Amended) The call screening database device of claim 1, wherein the screening database [[is]] comprises an object-oriented database.

10.   (Original)   The call screening database device of claim 1, wherein the received request includes a dialed number, and determining a response to the received request includes:

  determining whether the received request is permitted; and

  creating a response number using the dialed number and the received request.

11.   (Original)   The call screening database device of claim 10, wherein sending the response to the gatekeeper includes sending the response number.

12.   (Original)   The call screening database device of claim 10, wherein the response number includes a routing index.

13.   (Original)   The call screening database device of claim 1 wherein the packet-based communication network includes one or more H.323 endpoints.

14.   (Original)   The call screening database device of claim 1, wherein the packet-based communication network includes one or more Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) endpoints.

15.   (Currently Amended)   A Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) network comprising:

a first endpoint connected to a packet network;

a second endpoint connected to the packet network;

a gateway connected to the packet network; and

a call screening database device connected to the packet network, the call screening database device having a screening database residing in a memory of the call screening database device for processing a call request from the first endpoint to a second endpoint including information to allow the gateway to perform one or more of:

(i) determining whether an inbound call associated with a received request from the first or second endpoint is to be allowed,

(ii) determining whether a called number associated with the received request should be translated, and

(iii) determining whether a routing index should be included in the called number.

                                                                    PATENT

16.   (Currently Amended) The VoIP network of claim 15 wherein the packet
network [[is]] comprises an Internet Protocol (IP) network.

17.   (Currently Amended) The VoIP network of claim 15 wherein the second
endpoint [[is]] comprises an H.323 endpoint.

18.   (Currently Amended) The VoIP network of claim 15 wherein the second
endpoint [[is]] comprises a Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) endpoint.

19.   (Original)   The VoIP network of claim 15 wherein the call screening
database device processes a call by:
        receiving a query message requesting the location of the second endpoint;
        querying the screening database using information from the query message; and
        sending a response message based on a result of querying the screening database.

20.   (Currently Amended) The VoIP network of claim 19 wherein the received
query message and the response message conform to the H.323 protocol.

21.   (Original)   The VoIP network of claim 19 wherein the received query
message and the response message conform to the Session Initiation Protocol (SIP).

22.   (Currently Amended) A method of screening calls using a call screening
database in a packet-based communication network, the method comprising:
        receiving a call request in a gateway coupled to a packet-based communication
network:
        processing the call request in conjunction with a screening database residing in a
memory of a screening database device, the processing including one or more of (i) determining
whether an inbound call associated with the call request is to be allowed, (ii) determining whether

a called number associated with the call request should be translated, and (iii) determining whether a routing index should be included in the called number; and

routing the call request in ~~response to the process~~ accordance with the processing.

23.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22 wherein processing the call request includes:

sending a message to a gatekeeper, the gatekeeper processing the message in conjunction with the screening database; and

receiving a response to the message from the gatekeeper.

24.   (New) A method of screening calls comprising:

receiving a call request in a gateway coupled to a packet-based communication network;

processing the call request in conjunction with a screening database residing in a memory of one of a plurality of screening database devices, where a query message is sent to a first database of the plurality of screening database devices and if no response is received a query message is sent to a second database of the plurality of screening database devices;

wherein the processing including one or more of (i) determining whether an inbound call associated with the call request is to be allowed, (ii) determining whether a called number associated with the call request should be translated, and (iii) determining whether a routing index should be included in the called number; and

routing the call request in accordance with the processing.

25.   (New) The method of claim 24 wherein the packet-based communication network comprises an Internet Protocol (IP) network.

26.   (New) The method claim 24 wherein the call request and/or the query message comprises an H.323 compliant.

27.   (New) The method claim 24 wherein the call request and/or the query message comprises a Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) compliant.

28.   (New) A method of screening calls using a call screening database in a packet-based communication network, the method comprising:

a step for receiving a call request in a gateway;

a step for processing the call request in conjunction with a screening database residing in a memory of a screening database device, the processing including one or more of (i) determining whether an inbound call associated with the call request is to be allowed, (ii) determining whether a called number associated with the call request should be translated, and (iii) determining whether a routing index should be included in the called number; and

a step for routing the call request in accordance with the processing.

29.   (New) A call screening database device for use in a packet-based communication network comprising:

one or more communication devices providing access to a gatekeeper;

a memory device including a screening database; and

a processor operable to receive a request from the gatekeeper through the one or more communication devices,

wherein in response to a received request, the processor performs call screening in conjunction with the screening database,

wherein the received request includes a dialed number, and determining a response to the received request includes:

determining whether the received request is permitted; and

creating a response number using the dialed number and the received request,

wherein the response number includes a routing index.

30.   (New) The call screening database of claim 29, wherein the call screening database is one of a plurality of call screening databases and where said performance of call screening in conjunction with the screening database includes sending a query to a second call screening database of the plurality if no response is received from the first call screening database of the plurality.

31.   (New) The call screening database of claim 2, wherein the call screening database is one of a plurality of call screening databases and where said querying of the screening database includes sending a query to a second call screening database of the plurality if no response is received from the first call screening database of the plurality.